

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Pending claims 1-14 have been examined. Claim 11 is allowed. However, the Examiner rejects claims 1-10 and 12-14. Specifically, claims 1-10 and 12-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Baran, U.S. Patent No. 5,247,591 (hereinafter "Baran"). Claims 1-8 and 12-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Ogaki et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,819,049 (hereinafter "Ogaki"). Additionally, claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Baran in view of newly cited Geshwind, WIPO Publication No. WO 96/41463 (hereinafter "Geshwind").

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 11 is allowed.

III. Claims 1-10 and 12-13 Are Not Anticipated by Baran

Baran fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of the embodiments of the invention, as claimed in claims 1-10 and 12-13. For example and not by way of limitation, Baran fails to disclose or suggest "a workflow control table which stores in advance the species, the destination, and the operation assigned to each operation document image", as recited in claim 1 (*see also* claims 12 and 13).

The Examiner alleges that Baran discloses a workflow control table by describing that a user can create a mailing list (Baran: col. 4, line 66 to col. 5, line 30). By creating a mailing list, the amount of information that the user has to provide on subsequent fax cover sheets is reduced (*Id.*). For example, the mailing list allows the user to use abbreviations in future transmissions, wherein the fax server uses the mailing list to automatically convert the abbreviations into telephone numbers and extensions associated with the abbreviation in the mailing list (*Id.*). Because the mailing list reduces the amount of information that the user must provide on cover sheets, an amount of time required by the fax server to read and act on incoming fax messages is reduced (*Id.*).

Storing a mailing list that maps abbreviations of intended recipients, as indicated on a fax cover sheet, to information useful in delivering the faxed information does not correspond to storing "in advance the species, the destination, and the operation assigned to each operation document image" (*see* claims 1, 12 and 13). Indeed, in Baran, a user must still indicated the intended recipient/destination of a fax transmission via a cover sheet (*see, e.g.,* Baran: Fig. 1, "To" Field 16). Allowing a user to use abbreviations for an intended recipient/destination is not the same as storing the destination of an operation document image in advance.

Further still, Baran fails to disclose or suggest that after processing of an operation document image by an image identifying server, "a recognized result together with the operation document image [is transmitted] to the network", as recited in claim 1 (*see also* claims 12 and 13). To the contrary, Baran describes that a received original of, or the image of, a processed cover sheet is discarded, *e.g.,* erased from the memory of the fax server 42 (Baran: col. 5, lines

43-49). In particular, Baran describes a fax server 42 which reads a cover sheet 12 and converts an identification pattern 14 on the cover sheet 12 into a character string that is used as an address in a look-up table where the format information for the cover sheet 12 is stored (Baran: col. 5, lines 31-41). This format information is used by the fax server 42 for further analysis of the cover sheet 12 (Baran: col. 5, lines 41-43). Thereafter, secondary cover sheets 44, 44', 44'', etc. are prepared for the intended recipients of the document, and then the received original of, or the image of, the cover sheet is discarded, *e.g.*, erased from the memory of the fax server 42 (Baran: col. 5, lines 43-49). Therefore, Baran fails to teach and cannot possibly suggest transmitting a recognized result together with the operation document image to the network (*see* claims 1, 12 and 13).

For at least these exemplary reasons, claims 1, 12 and 13 are not anticipated by Baran. Consequently, claims 2-10 are not anticipated by Baran at least by virtue of their dependency.

IV. Claims 1-8 and 12-13 Are Not Anticipated by Ogaki

Ogaki fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention. For example and not by way of limitation, Ogaki fails to disclose or suggest "a workflow control table which stores in advance the species, the destination, and the operation assigned to each operation document image", as recited in claim 1 (*see also* claims 12 and 13).

The Examiner alleges that the circulation management table 80 of Ogaki corresponds to the recited workflow control table. To the contrary, the circulation management table 80 of

Ogaki does not store in advance a destination assigned to the operation document image. While the circulation management table 80 has a field for destination information, this destination information is provided by the user during or after creation of the documents to be transferred. For example, a circulation sheet 31a, 31b is used to provide information such as the sender's name, the circulation path, the name of the document to be circulated, etc. (Ogaki: col. 4, lines 47-59; col. 5, line 15 to col. 6, line 14; Figs. 4-5; Fig. 13, step S3; and Fig. 14, steps S35 and S43).

Furthermore, Ogaki fails to disclose or suggest "an image identifying server for identifying the species of the operation document image to retrieve the species stored in the workflow control table in response to the identified species, to automatically recognize the corresponding destination and operation, and to transmit a recognized result together with the operation document image to the network", as recited in claim 1 (*see also* claims 12 and 13).

In Ogaki, a circulation path is specified by a user (*see, e.g.*, col. 7, lines 32-40). Ogaki fails to disclose or suggest any correspondence between a destination of an operation document image and a species of the operation document image that is retrieved from a workflow control table. Thus, Ogaki fails to disclose or suggest an image identifying server that automatically recognizes a destination corresponding to the operation document image having a species that was identified and then retrieved from the workflow control table.

For at least these exemplary reasons, claims 1, 12 and 13 are not anticipated by Ogaki. Consequently, claims 2-8 are not anticipated by Ogaki at least by virtue of their dependency.

V. Claim 14 Is Patentable Over A Reasonable Combination, If Any, Of Baran And Geshwind

Because Geshwind fails to cure the exemplary deficiencies of Baran, as set forth above with respect to claim 1, claim 14 is patentable over a reasonable combination, if any, of Baran and Geshwind, at least by virtue of its dependency.

VI. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant again respectfully requests that the Examiner provide a signed and initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 submitted with the IDS filed on April 27, 1999 to acknowledge consideration of the references cited therein.

VII. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited: If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Application No. 09/244,419

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Respectfully submitted,



Billy Carter Raulerson
Registration No. 52,156

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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